

# Troopers Investigate Fatal Motor Vehicle Crash

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**Newark, DE-** The Delaware State Police Collision Reconstruction Unit is currently investigating a fatal motor vehicle crash that occurred early this morning which has claimed the life of a 24 year old man.

The initial investigation has determined that the crash occurred at approximately 12:43 a.m. this morning, Saturday, July 23, 2016, as Natasha Sagapolutele, 29, of Bear, DE, was operating a 2005 Ford Explorer and was attempting to make a left hand turn from eastbound DE Rt. 4 (E. Chestnut Hill Road), Newark, onto Old Newark Road, Newark. As the Ford began to cross the westbound lanes of DE Rt. 4, it was struck on its right hand side by the front of a 2015 Mazda 6, which was traveling at an apparent high rate of speed on westbound DE Rt. 4, and which was being operated by Michael A. Burns, 24, of Newark, DE. The force of the impact caused the Explorer to spin in a counterclockwise direction before coming to rest facing in a southbound direction across the westbound lanes of the roadway. The Mazda continued traveling in a northwesterly direction, striking a curb and then a fence, where it then came to rest.

Michael Burns, who was not properly restrained at the time of the crash, was pronounced dead at the scene. Natasha Sagapolutele, who was properly restrained at the time of the crash, was treated at the scene by New Castle County Paramedics. She was then transported by EMS to the Christiana Hospital where she was admitted for non-life threatening injuries.

This crash remains under investigation by the Delaware State Police Collision Reconstruction Unit. Alcohol use and speed on the part of Michael Burns is being considered as a factor in the crash.

The westbound lanes of DE Rt. 4 were closed for approximately 4 hours as the crash was investigated and cleared.

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